



Serial No.: 10/044,682
Group Art Unit: 3643
TKHR 11954-1920

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the following claims as indicated by entering the underlined matter and deleting the matter lined through:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for transferring poultry carcasses suspended from shackles from a first overhead conveyor to a second overhead conveyor, ~~in which overhead conveyors the carcasses are transported suspended from shackles comprising:~~

a transfer wheel rotatable about a vertical axis for positioning and ~~positioned~~ between both the first and the second overhead conveyors,

said transfer wheel being provided with holders for the carcasses, said holders being rotatable with respect to said transfer wheel, and

orientation means ~~further being present~~ operatively associated with said transfer wheel for equalizing the spacial initial orientation of the carcasses in the holder from at receipt of the carcass on the transfer wheel to and the spacial final orientation of the carcass in the holder at its discharge from the transfer wheel, the spacial initial orientation and the spacial final orientation being identical relative the direction of travel of the carcass from the first overhead conveyor to the second overhead conveyor.

2. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the orientation means being adapted for keeping the spacial orientation of the carcass in the holder constant throughout ~~during during~~ the transport on the transfer wheel.

3. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein each of said ~~the~~ holders being is being bearing mounted in the transfer wheel to be rotatable about themselves about a vertical axis.

4. (Previously amended) An apparatus according to claim 3, the orientation means being adapted for relative rotation of the holders with respect to the transfer wheel.

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5. (Previously amended) An apparatus according to claim 4, the orientation means being adapted for letting the holders rotate 1:1 with the transfer wheel.

6. (Previously amended) An apparatus according to claim 4, the orientation means comprising the first orientation means for orienting a first of the holders, and second orientation means for orienting others of the holders, which second orientation means are operated by the first orientation means.

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7. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 6, the transfer wheel being connected to a vertical shaft in a rotatably fixed manner, the shaft being rotatable about the vertical axis, the first orientation means comprising a first driving disc provided on the first holder, a second driving disc placed loosely on the shaft but retained in spacial orientation, and a driving belt or driving chain running circumferentially about both said first and second driving discs.

8. (Previously amended) An apparatus according to claim 7, the diameter of both driving discs being equal.

9. Cancelled.

10. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 6, the second orientation means comprising a first toothed wheel that is attached to the first holder in a rotably fixed manner, a central toothed wheel freely rotatable on the shaft and driven by the first toothed wheel, ~~as well~~ as and second toothed wheels each attached in a rotably fixed manner to ~~every the~~ other holders, which second toothed wheels are in ~~driving-driven~~ engagement with the central toothed wheel.

11. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the second toothed wheels each have ~~having~~ a diameter that is equal to the ~~one~~ diameter of the first toothed wheel.

12. (Currently amended) An apparatus for transferring poultry carcasses from a first overhead conveyor to a second overhead conveyor, in which overhead conveyors the carcasses are transported suspended from shackles comprising:

a transfer wheel rotatable about a vertical axis and positioned between both the first and the second overhead conveyors,

~~which~~ said transfer wheel being is provided with holders for the carcasses radially spaced from said vertical axis of said transfer wheel and each holder having a central shaft about which it rotates, and

orientation means responsive to the rotation of said transfer wheel for ~~further being present for further being present~~ rotating ~~the~~ each of said holders about said a central shafts and with respect to the transfer wheel during the transport of the holders by the transfer wheel, ~~wherein each central shaft is radially spaced from the shaft of the transfer wheel, wherein each central shaft is radially spaced from the shaft of the transfer wheel.~~

13. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the orientation means is being adapted for 1:1 continuous rotation of the holders with respect to ~~and~~ the transfer wheel.

14. (Currently amended) A holder for suspended transport of a poultry carcass, provided with two substantially parallel accommodation spaces for the legs of the carcass, the accommodation spaces each forming a continuous open ended slit in horizontal direction ~~from one end to the other end and open at both ends from one end to the other end and open at both ends~~, the distance between the accommodation spaces at their one end being different from the distance therebetween at their other end.

15. (Currently amended) A holder according to claim 14, and further including inclined turned end members being arranged on either side of one end of the accommodation spaces to prevent unintentional backwards movement of the legs.

16. (Currently amended) A holder according to claim 14, wherein the distance between the accommodation spaces being larger at said one end than at said other end, inclined turned end

members being arranged on either side of said one end of the accommodation spaces to prevent unintentional backwards movement of the legs out of said one end.

17. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the holders being provided with accommodation spaces for the legs of the carcass, the accommodation spaces each forming ~~a continuous~~ an open-ended ~~a continuous~~ horizontal slit.

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18. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 17, wherein ~~in the holders in the~~ ~~holders~~ the distance between the accommodation spaces of said holders at their one end of said holders being different from the distance therebetween at their other end of said holders.

19. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the holders are being provided with accommodation spaces for the legs of the carcass, the accommodation spaces each forming an open ended ~~a continuous~~ ~~a continuous~~ horizontal slit ~~in horizontal~~ direction.

20. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 19, wherein ~~in the holders in the~~ ~~holders~~ the distance between the accommodation spaces of said holders at their one end ~~being is~~ different from the distance therebetween at their other end.

21. (Currently amended) An apparatus for transferring poultry carcasses from a first overhead conveyor to a second overhead conveyor, comprising:

a transfer wheel rotatable about a shaft and having a perimeter, said transfer wheel disposed between the first and the second overhead conveyors;

a carcass receipt point and a carcass discharge point, the carcass receipt point being disposed between the first overhead conveyor and the transfer wheel, the carcass discharge point being disposed between the transfer wheel and the second overhead conveyor;

a plurality of holders, each holder being rotatably mounted on said transfer wheel at the perimeter of said transfer wheel and configured to receive one of the carcasses from the first

overhead conveyor at the carcass receipt point and to discharge the carcass to the second overhead conveyor at the carcass discharge point; and

holder orientation means responsive to the continuous rotation of said transfer wheel for continuously rotating said holders in unison with respect to said transfer wheel;

said holder orientation means configured so that each carcass received by a holder maintains its rotational orientation as received at the carcass receipt point continuously until delivered to the carcass discharge point

~~wherein each holder has a first orientation at the receipt point and a second orientation at the discharge point and the first and second orientations are the same.~~

~~wherein each holder has a first orientation at the receipt point and a second orientation at the discharge point and the first and second orientations are the same.~~

22. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 21, and further including a toothed wheel engaging each holder for rotating each holder in unison in response to the rotation of said ~~wherein the hold are rotatably mounted to the transfer wheel.~~

23. (Currently amended) The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein each holder is operatively connected to the other holders and each holder maintains a constant orientation relative to the other holders as it rotates with respect to ~~centerline during rotation of the transfer wheel.~~

24. (Currently amended) An apparatus for transferring poultry carcasses from a first overhead conveyor to a second overhead conveyor, comprising:

a transfer wheel positioned between said first and second overhead conveyors, said transfer wheel having a central axis and a perimeter rotatable about said central axis,

a plurality of bird holders spaced about said perimeter of said transfer wheel for receiving poultry carcasses from said first overhead conveyor and carrying poultry carcasses from said first overhead conveyor about said central axis to said second overhead conveyor and delivering carcasses to said second overhead conveyor,

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cancel.

orientation control means responsive to the rotation of said transfer wheel for continuously progressively progressively maintaining the orientation of said bird holders and the carcasses carried by said bird holders as said transfer wheel rotates, so that the carcasses continuously retain their orientation as received from said first overhead conveyor as they move about said transfer wheel and are delivered to said second overhead conveyor in the same orientation as received from said first overhead conveyor.
